

AN EXTENSION PROGRAM IN RURAL HOUSING *

Reserve

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An effective program for the improvement of rural housing involves the cooperation of all the extension staff, both State and county. The program must appeal to farm and rural families as practical and must be one in which they participate actively as local leaders of educational work and as demonstrators of good housing. The interest and cordial cooperation of local builders and building supply dealers is needed. Be sure to include the interest of youths through 4-H Clubs and schools to develop the attitudes, knowledge, and skills which will contribute to the improvement of rural housing. Finally, the program must be practical, recognizing that a desire and a need for better housing exist which temporarily cannot be met because of scarcity of materials and labor. Now is the time, therefore, to train extension workers and local leaders in the features of a sound housing program before building materials become more plentiful and rural housing construction outruns education and planning.

Supervisors can incorporate the program in State, district, and county schedules of extension activities, and can facilitate the best subject-matter service to county extension agents in harmony with the various needs of counties, and the availability of specialists and of visual aids and other educational media.

The following outline applicable to a State extension program in rural housing covers three points,- developing, conducting, and evaluating the program:

I. Developing the program.

A. Accumulating and interpreting facts.

B. Organizing the planning group (or committee).

Specialists in related subject matter.

Sociology Architecture

Family life Engineering

Farm management Forestry

Home management Horticulture

Home furnishings Entomology

Health (and others grouped as desired)

Supervisors, State and district, and 4-H Club leaders.

County extension workers,- agricultural, home demonstration, and 4-H Club agents.

C. Determining the objectives.

1. Educational objectives to change -

a. Attitudes (Heart)

b. Knowledge (Head)

c. Skills (Hand)

* Adapted from the Northeastern Region Workshop on Rural Housing, September 16-20, 1946.

2. Housing subject matter -
 - a. Relation to farm and home planning
 - b. Investment and financing
 - c. House location and orientation
 - d. Space lay-out planning
 - e. Construction (including repair)
 - f. Equipment
 - g. Furnishing
 - h. Outside and inside appearance
 - i. Landscaping
- (These incorporate related subject matter, such as health, etc.)

3. Goals in farm housing improvement for the State, the districts, and the counties.

D. Developing the county program

(State extension workers must be prepared to give time to assure success in pilot counties).

II. Conducting the program.

- A. Arrange and conduct training meetings for county extension agents dealing with the most urgent procedure and subject matter first.
- B. Aid county extension workers in launching their county programs based on pilot county experiences.
- C. Develop local farm leaders in house planning and in housing demonstrations. Use the family group method for planning and for discussion of the principles of good housing -- that is, to develop the skill and knowledge required for sound planning. Encourage self-help, community cooperation and exchange of work and use of local building materials.
- D. Develop builder, dealer, and industrial cooperation with the program.
- E. Support the program with adequate educational publications, visual aids, etc., including cooperation from radio, press, farm papers, etc.
- F. Utilize the related programs of government agencies.

III. Evaluate the program and its progress in light of the objectives (I-C) and strengthen the operations (II), which will advance the program most effectively toward its goals.